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ABSTRACT

This booklet is a guide to the process of transferring college credits from one institution of higher education to another. First, it identifies the factors that affect college transfer, including college and/or state policies on transfer of credits, college residency requirements, comparability of courses, grade received in a course, and accreditation and educational quality of the institution or course. Transfer counselors are advised to be sure that their students follow correct transfer procedures, know the requirements, review the official transcript, and get in touch with the Registrar directly. The essential components of an official transcript are also listed and explained, including institutional identification, student identification, record of work pursued, academic status, statement of graduation, and last-entry notation. Examples are provided of a student cover letter, a portion of a course syllabus, a course equivalency chart, a projected academic program, a recommendation letter, a letter from the accrediting agency, and a transcript. Other resources, such as agencies and publications, are listed, The booklet ends with other suggestions and a list of reasons why credits don't transfer. (DB)

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DETC OCCASIONAL PAPER

Strategies for Helping Students Transfer Credits

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DETC OCCASIONAL PAPER
NUMBER 15

by

Mr. Ali Fares, Academic Director, Cleveland Institute of Electronics

Printed by the Cleveland Institute of Electronics, Cleveland, Ohio

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DETC OCCASIONAL PAPERS (formerly *NHSC Occasional Papers*) are essays intended to stimulate and encourage candid exchanges of ideas between distance study professionals. For a complete set of *Occasional Papers*, write or call the DETC.

Introduction

The process of transferring credit from one institution to another has become a complex and confusing procedure. Every institution develops its own policies and procedures concerning award and transfer of credit, so no institution, organization or agency can promise that another institution will accept its credit. Even if an institution is accredited, there's no guarantee that its credits will transfer.

Colleges usually have limits on how much transfer credit they will accept. Sometimes credits may be "accepted" for transfer but they may not be "applied" to a degree requirement. An institution may accept credits and post them to a student's transcript, but these may not necessarily apply toward graduation in a given field of study. In this case, the accepted credits would be treated as "electives" and would not be used to meet any specific graduation requirements.

Before a student tries to transfer from one institution or program to another, he or she should ask, in writing, which credits will be accepted and applied toward the certificate or degree he or she is seeking.

Factors Affecting Credit Transfer

Who makes the decision on credit acceptance? It could be the chairperson of the department that offers the degree program, a college faculty transcript review committee, the dean in the specific academic area (for example, engineering, business, or arts and sciences), an admissions officer, the registrar, or a faculty advisor. No matter who it is, there are certain factors that may affect their decision to accept credit. These are:

• **College and/or state policies on transfer and types of credit:** Most colleges and some states have policies about the number of credits they will transfer from another institution as well as the amount of credit

for examinations, military training, business and industry credits, or lifelong learning that they will accept and apply to a degree. These policies vary greatly.

• **College residency requirements:** Most colleges require that a student complete a specific number of credits at their institution in order to be awarded a degree.

• **Appropriateness of the course:** Does the course the student completed fit into the college's degree program? Each degree program has specific credit requirements. If the credit the student earned doesn't fulfill specific requirements, and they have already completed all of the elective courses, then they may have credit that has transferred but cannot be applied to their degree. In addition, some courses may not be relevant to the degree they are currently pursuing.

• **Appropriate level of the course:** A college's acceptance of a student's credit recommendations depends, in part, on his or her academic standing and how many credits they have already earned. Some institution's require that the student complete the upper level courses with their school.

• **Comparability of the course:** Does the content of the course compare favorably with the topics in the courses that are in the college's current degree curriculum? Because comparability of course content is important, the student should be prepared to discuss how the course he or she completed includes the topics required in the college course.

• **Grade received in a course:** Some colleges have a policy that requires a course grade before accepting it for transfer credit. Most colleges have a policy about transfer of credits with the grade of "D." Some colleges will accept these credits as long as they are not in courses in the student's major.

• **Academically credible information and documentation:** Students are required to have their official transcripts sent directly from the colleges they attended. The transcripts must look official and generally should be received directly from the school registrar's office.

• **Proper accreditation and educational quality of the institution or course:** Is the institution where the student earned his/her credit accredited by a recognized accrediting agency? If the institution is properly accredited, chances are that the courses the student completed are of sound educational quality.

Advice for Your Students

Let's say a student has completed several courses at your institution and now he or she wants to transfer the credits they earned to another college or university to complete a degree. They have checked to see what the transfer policies are and they are ready to proceed. Here is some basic advice you should give your graduates:

1. **Follow the correct transfer procedures**. Fill out the correct school application. Be specific where the transcript needs to go when providing the receiving institution's address.

2. **Know the requirements.** The student should know: (1) what are the core or general requirements; (2) what are the major departmental requirements; and (3) what, if any, are the residency requirements?

3. **Complete the transfer application on time.** Neatness of an application does count. Double check deadlines, especially departmental deadlines.

4. **Contact the transfer counselors as early as possible.**

5. **Get a copy of the official transcript.** Look it over to make certain all grades are accurate and up-to-date. Are all the courses listed properly? If the student's name has changed, he/she should check to be certain it is accurate and consistent on the transcript. If a student has taken any classes and earned a Pass/Fail, he/she should be sure that the transcript indicates what constitutes a passing grade.

6. **Get in touch with the Registrar directly.** Ask for a personal interview, if possible. The student is the salesperson selling him/herself and his/her transcript.

7. **Follow-up with the admissions office.** Students should not be shy about appealing a credit evaluation if credits are rejected. They might have to negotiate credit for each course they have taken.

In addition to the suggestions above, students should put together an information packet which includes the following:

1. A cover letter explaining the packet of information (see Figure 1).

2. The "Course Syllabi" from the courses they have completed. The student should have saved everything from the classes he/she took: syllabi, notebooks, papers, and exams (see Figure 2).

3. A copy of the school's catalog with classes they have taken clearly marked.

4. "Course Equivalency Chart" (see Figure 3).

5. Compile a "Projected Academic Program." This demonstrates their familiarly with the receiving college's educational system (see Figure 4).

Figure 1. Cover Letter

January 1, 2003

Ms. Name
Transfer Counselor
University Name
123 Street Name
City Name, State Name Zip Code

Dear Ms. Counselor:

To help aid you in your review of my former academic credits, I've enclosed the following information:

- Transcripts from previous attended universities and institutions (official transcripts will be sent directly from the granting institutions);
- Syllabi of courses taken at name of universities and institutions;
- "Course Equivalency Chart" table of courses taken at various colleges which is comparable to courses at your institution;
- Copies of "Course Catalog" from previous attended colleges;
- My "Projected Academic Program" while attending your institution; and
- A "Letter of Recommendation."

Please call me if you need any further information. Thank you in advance for your review.

Sincerely,

Michael Doe

Michael Doe

6. A recommendation letter from their former professors and/or instructors (see Figure 5).

7. A letter from the accrediting agency (see Figure 6).

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Figure 2. A Portion of a Course Syllabus

World College

Course Syllabus

1. **Course Number and Title:** EET 471 Control Systems I — Three Semester Hours
2. **Course Description:** This course is designed to explore industrial controls and emphasis on position, force, motion, fluid and temperature transducers, and signal transmission and conditioners.
3. **Course Goals:** Upon completion of this course the student will:
   - 3.1 - Be knowledgeable of open-loop control and close-loop control.
   - 3.2 - Be skilled in the operation of servomechanism control system.
   - 3.3 - Be skilled in the operation of process control system.
   - 3.4 - Understand the transfer function of the performance of higher-order elements.
   - 3.5 - Be knowledgeable of different types of transducers.
   - 3.6 - Understand and be able to configure circuits for signal conditioning and transmission.
4. **Course Topics:**
   - A. Introduction to Industrial Controls - Chapter 1
     - 4.1 - Purpose of automatic control.
     - 4.2 - Open-loop control.
     - 4.3 - Closed-loop control.
   - B. Process Element Characteristics - Chapter 2
     - 4.4 - Transfer function.
     - 4.5 - Gain or span.
     - 4.6 - Integral process element.
     - 4.7 - First-order process element.
     - 4.8 - Dead time.
     - 4.9 - Second-order process element.
     - 4.10 - Higher-order process element.
   - C. Transducers - Chapter 3
     - 4.11 - Transducer specifications.
     - 4.12 - Position transducers.
     - 4.13 - Force transducers.
     - 4.14 - Motion transducers.

Figure 3. Course Equivalency Chart

Course Equivalency Chart

Awarding Institutions				Receiving Institution (World College)			
Course #	Subject	Title	Credit Hours	Course #	Subject	Title	Credit Hours
Grand Rapids Community College							
104	MA	Elementary Algebra	4	121	MTH	Algebra & Trigonometry I	3
108	MA	Trigonometry	2				
110	MA	College Algebra	4	122	MTH	Algebra & Trigonometry II	3
106	EL	Technical Electricity	4	111	EET	Electric Circuits I	4
107	EL	Basic Electronics	4	112	EET	Electric Circuits II	4
115	PH	Applied Physics	4	241	PHY	Technical Physics	3
101	EN	English Composition #1	3	232	HUM	Technical Writing I	4
102	EN	English Composition #2	3	242	HUM	Technical Writing II	4
Lakeland Community College							
213	EET	Electronics II	3.3	114	EET	Solid State Electronic Devices	4
221	EET	Electronics III	3.3	116	EET	Electronic Circuits I	4
Ohio University							
103	ECON	Principles of Economics	2.67	351	SCE	Principles of Economics	3
101	PSY	General Psychology	3.3	352	SCE	General Psychology	3
200	MGT	Intro. to Management	2.67	362	SCE	Intro. to Management	3
101	SOC	Intro. to Sociology	3.3	363	SCE	Intro. to Sociology	3
104	ECON	Principles of Macroeconomics	2.67	471	SCE	Principles of Macroeconomics	3
220	COMT	Communication Syst. & App.	2.67	481	CET	Digital Data Communications	2
301	MKT	Marketing Principles	2.67	482	SCE	Marketing Principles	3

Assuming that the student has transfer credits from the three above-mentioned institutions (Awarding Institutions) to World College (Receiving Institution).

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Figure 4. Projected Academic Program

BACHELOR OF ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Course Number	Subject	Credit Hours
1st Semester		
MTH111	TOPICS IN TECHNICAL MATH	1
EET121	ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS II	4
CET121	DIGITAL ELECTRONICS I	4
EET122	ELECTRONIC CIRCUIT TROUBLESHOOTING	3
EET124	SYMPTOMS IN ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS	3
MTH231	TECHNICAL CALCULUS I	3
	1st Semester Total Credit Hours	18
2nd Semester		
CET231	DIGITAL ELECTRONICS II	4
EET231	NETWORK ANALYSIS I	4
MTH232	TECHNICAL CALCULUS II	3
EET232	SOLID STATE CIRCUIT DESIGN	4
PHY241	TECHNICAL PHYSICS	3
	2nd Semester Total Credit Hours	18
3rd Semester		
EET241	NETWORK ANALYSIS II	4
CET241	ADVANCED DIGITAL LABORATORY	1
CET242	MICROPROCESSOR THEORY AND APPLICATIONS	4
CET351	COMPUTER AIDED CIRCUIT DESIGN & DRAFTING	2
EET351	ELECTRICAL POWER AND MACHINES	4
CET352	C-LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING	3
	3rd Semester Total Credit Hours	18
4th Semester		
EET361	ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS I	4
EET471	CONTROL SYSTEMS	3
EET473	CONTROL SYSTEMS I LABORATORY	2
PHY351	PHYSICS LABORATORY I	3
EET362	ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS II	4
	4th Semester Total Credit Hours	16
5th Semester		
EET472	CONTROL SYSTEMS II	3
EET474	CONTROL SYSTEMS II LABORATORY	2
PHY352	PHYSICS LABORATORY II	3
EET482	SENIOR DESIGN PROJECT	3
SCE353	CULTURES RESEARCH PAPER	3
	5th Semester Total Credit Hours	14

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Figure 5. Recommendation Letter

January 1, 2003

RE: Michael Doe
123 Any Street
Any City, Any State 12345

Dear Sir/Madam:

It is with great pleasure that we recommend Mr. Michael Doe to your program. He completed his studies with us on September 1, 1995. His outstanding achievement indicates his ability and determination to advance in the electronics field. We believe Mr. Doe would be a valuable asset to your institution.

Mr. Doe enrolled in the Associate in Applied Science in Electronics Engineering Technology Degree Program on November 20, 1992. The CIE Associate in Applied Science Degree is a comprehensive program offered to both beginners and advanced students of electronics. Special emphasis is placed on advanced mathematical techniques to allow the student to make engineering-level calculations in circuit design. Calculus, transient analysis, and differential equations are familiar tools to the graduate of this program.

I have known Mr. Doe for approximately 3 years while teaching him many courses in electronics. He has shown a determination and excellence in pursuing his goals. His participation in advancing the material offered in the course was noted through his many suggestions and remarks. I feel confident and certainly proud to recommend Michael to advance his education with your institution.

Please feel free to contact me at the above mentioned telephone number for any further inquiries.

Sincerely,

Ali Fares

Mr. Ali Fares, Academic Director

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Figure 6. Letter from Accrediting Agency

January 1, 2003

Mr. John Doe, Registrar
ABC University
223 West South Street
Denver, CO 22222

Dear Mr. Doe:

This certifies that the World College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council and is a member in good standing.

The school was first accredited in January 1993 and has been accredited ever since. It has been found to meet or exceed the Commission's published academic and ethical standards.

The Accrediting Commission of the DETC is presently listed (and has been since 1959) by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a "nationally recognized accrediting agency." Like the regional accrediting agencies, the DETC Accrediting Commission is reviewed periodically by the U.S. Department of Education to make certain that it meets the criteria for federal recognition as published in Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Accrediting Commission is also a charter member of the new organization, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) formerly the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA).

Sincerely yours,

Michael P. Lambert

Michael P. Lambert
Executive Secretary

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Elements of a Transcript

As discussed in *DETC's Occasional Paper Number Ten, Home Study Academic Transcripts,* transcripts should be easy to read and interpret. Here are the essential components needed for an official transcript:

• **Identification of the Institution**: This includes name, full address, and a statement of accreditation.

• **Identification of the Student:** This means name, address, date of birth, place of birth and identification number.

• **Basis of Admission:** For secondary school graduation or equivalent this means name and address of the school and the date the student graduated. For other previous education, this means name and location of institution, period of attendance, degree or certificate received, and year degree conferred.

• **Record of Work Pursued:** This means dates of attendance; course identification; amount of credit; term grade or grade point average; cumulative credits, grade points, grade point average; narrative evaluation (if no grades recorded); notation of type of credit; and demonstrated competencies.

• **Academic Status:** This should list any academic suspension or dismissal.

• **Statement of Graduation:** This includes degree received, date conferred, program or major, and professional certification requirements.

• **Supplemental Information for Graduate Students:** This may include satisfactory completion of institutional qualifying examinations;

advancement and/or admission of candidacy, and or title of thesis and/or dissertation.

• **Last Entry Notation:** This is a line that states "End of Transcript" or "End of Permanent Record." By including this notation no one can add more entries.

Other essential elements of an official transcript are: embossed seal of the institution; date transcript was issued; certification of the officer's signature; a statement explaining the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA); "issued to student" statement should be printed when applicable. Also, a key or legend should accompany each transcript. The key should be printed on the back of the transcript paper stock.

Please see pages 15 and 16 for a sample of a transcript.

Helping Your Students

In addition to having a well designed transcript, there are other ways your institution can help your students to get their credits accepted. Here are some suggestions:

• Acquire the appropriate accreditation or recognition from an approved agency. For distance education, accreditation by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council is "a must." Also, consider recognition or membership with appropriate industry-related organizations.

• Write a letter giving a persuasive argument on behalf of your students. You can also ask DETC to write a letter.

• Send the name of other colleges who have already accepted your institution's credits.

- Emphasize to your graduates the importance of using a professional application and tell them what to include to make an impressive package.
- Report a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) for the Pass/Fail courses.
- Send a catalog with the transcript and a cover letter explaining your program.
- Use common course numbering systems. Transfer credit is generally awarded on a course-by-course basis.
- Follow-up with the receiving institutions.
- Network with admissions officers and transfer counselors. Join the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).
- Pursue articulation agreements with schools in your area.
- Convince the admissions office that your institution is a respected institution.
- Establish a position for a "Transfer Counselor" who will write persuasive letters of recommendation.

An Example

What does your catalog tell your students about transferring credits? A common disclosure used states, "Every institution has its own transfer credit policies. You are advised to ask about these policies before you attempt to transfer your credits." Now, let's look at one school's inventive way of describing the process:

We work towards making the transfer of your credits successful. We believe our responsibility includes helping you every step of the way in your academic future. Our registrar's office is always available for counseling on how to get the transfer credit you deserve when you decide to continue your education. Remember, however, each institution has its own policies and procedures regarding acceptance of transfer credits. It is a good idea to discuss your prior training with the college or university you wish to transfer to before enrolling. There is no guarantee credits will be accepted.

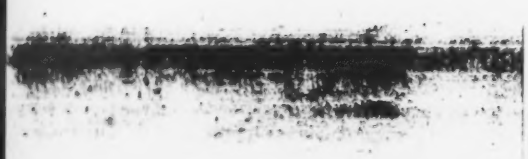
Here are just some of the ways our college helps you:

- *We are accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council, which is a "nationally recognized agency" by the U.S. Department of Education and a member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).*

- *We are active members of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO). Our registrar's office follows published guidelines for preparing your academic transcript and will be your advocate in matters of transfer credits.*

- *Many of our courses have been reviewed by the American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service. You may receive an official transcript of completed courses that have been evaluated by the ACE for college credit transfer.*

- *We are a Servicemembers Opportunity College. If you are in the military, the credits you earn here will most likely transfer to over 1,200 other SOC colleges around the country.*



Sample Transcript (page 1)

WORLD COLLEGE

5193 Shore Drive, Suite 105. Virginia Beach, VA 23455-2500. (757) 464-4600

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORD

DOE, MICHAEL K.
SS#: 123-45-6789
STD.#: 0012W0001

World College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council. Approved by the Virginia Council of Higher Education.

COURSE NO.	COURSE TITLE	GRADE	CREDIT HOURS	COURSE NO.	COURSE TITLE	GRADE	CREDIT HOURS
	*** SEMESTER 1 *** 12/30/1994-12/29/1995				MINNEAPOLIS BUSINESS COLLEGE		
CET351	COMP. AID. CIRCUIT DESIGN & DRAFTING	A	2		TOTAL TRANSFER CREDITS:	TR	12
EET351	ELECTRICAL POWER AND MACHINES	A	4				
CET352	C-LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING	B	3		****END OF PERMANENT RECORD****		
CET483	COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN BUSINESS	A	3				
SCE352	GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY	A	3				
EET471	CONTROL SYSTEMS I	B	3				
EET473	CONTROL SYSTEMS I LABORATORY	A	1				
PHY351	PHYSICS LABORATORY I	A	3				
EET361	ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS I	B	4				
SCE362	INTRODUCTION TO MANAGEMENT	B	3				
	*** SEMESTER 2 *** 12/30/1995-04/23/1996						
EET474	CONTROL SYSTEMS II LABORATORY	A	1				
EET362	ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS II	B	4				
EET472	CONTROL SYSTEMS II	A	3				
CET481	DIGITAL DATA COMMUNICATIONS	A	3				
SCE471	PRINCIPLES OF MACROECONOMICS	B	3				
EET482	SENIOR DESIGN PROJECT	B	3				
PHY352	PHYSICS LABORATORY 2	B	3				
SCE482	MARKETING PRINCIPLES	A	3				
	***** TRANSFER CREDITS*****						
	CLEVELAND INSTITUTE OF ELECTRONICS						
	TOTAL TRANSFER CREDITS:	TR	74				

Date Printed: 11/11/97

Registrar

		CURRICULUM	GRANTED	DATE
53	3.51	ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	BACHELOR OF ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY Magna Cum Laude	4/22/96

"This is an officially sealed and signed transcript. A raised seal is required."

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 THIS INFORMATION IS RELEASED ON THE CONDITION THAT THE RECIPIENT "WILL NOT PERMIT ANY OTHER PARTY TO HAVE ACCESS TO SUCH INFORMATION WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE STUDENT".

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Sample Transcript (page 2)

5193 Shore Drive, Suite 105
Virginia Beach, VA 23455-2500
Voice: (757) 464-4600
Fax: (757) 464-3687

WORLD COLLEGE

World College is accredited by
The Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council.
Approved by the Virginia Council of Higher Education.

WORLD COLLEGE GRADE REPORT INSTRUCTIONS

World College uses a 4.00 quality point system. The quality of performance in any academic course is reported by a letter grade which is assigned by the instructor of the course. Grades A, B, C, D are passing grades.

These grades are assigned quality points as follow:

Grade		Quality Points
A-4.0	Excellent	4 grade points per credit
B-3.0	Good	3 grade points per credit
C-2.0	Average	2 grade points per credit
D-1.0	Below Average	1 grade point per credit
F-	Not Passing	0 grade point per credit

ACADEMIC STANDING

The graded-point-average (GPA) is the basis for determining the scholastic standing of a student. GPA is obtained by dividing the total number of points earned by the total number of a semester credit hours attempted. Students are considered to be in good academic standing if they maintain a minimum GPA of 2.00 and complete their course with a passing grade.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Students who fail to maintain the required minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 will be placed on academic probation. Removal of this probationary status will occur automatically at the end of each semester when the student's GPA rises to the required minimum or higher.

SPECIAL GRADES (NO EFFECT ON GRADE POINT AVERAGE)

CR	Credit
NC	No Credit
NR	In Progress
P	Pass for Credit
RD	Report Delayed
SP	Satisfactory Progress
TR	Transfer Credit

HONORS

Baccalaureate degrees with honors are conferred in accordance with the following cumulative grade point average:

Cum Laude	3.2
Magna Cum Laude	3.5
Summa Cum Laude	3.8

❑ If you have additional questions about this document, please contact our office at (757) 464-4600

WORLD COLLEGE

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• *Credits received from standardized credentialing examinations, military training, life experience and other special programs and examinations may also apply towards your degree.*

Other Useful Agencies

In addition to DETC accreditation, there are two other agencies that offer services which are helpful when dealing with transfer of credits. These are:

• **The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers**: AACRAO membership is open to degree-granting institutions accredited by a recognized accrediting agency. Accredited non-degree-granting institutions are eligible for associate membership. AACRAO is a nonprofit, voluntary, professional association who represents more than 2,300 institutions and agencies in the United States and in 39 other countries. You should get involved in local and state level chapters of AACRAO. Work with the registrars on a one-to-one basis with the goal of being listed in the state directory as an institution recognized for credit transfer. For more information on AACRAO, call 202-293-9161 or check out their web site at http://www.aacrao.com. AACRAO publishes two useful guides:

• *The Academic Record and Transcript Guide*, 1996, Item No. 1249 for $30 from the AACRAO Distribution Center at 301-604-9073 or from their web site (see above)

• *Transfer Credit Practices of Designated Educational Institutions* (1996-98), Item 3009 for $40 from the AACRAO Distribution Center.

• **American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (formerly ACE/PONSI).** The College Credit Recommendation Service evaluates college-level courses and assign academic credits to them. For distance education courses, the institution must be

accredited by the Accrediting Commission of DETC to have the courses reviewed by the College Credit Recommendation Service. These recommendations are published annually in *The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs* ($75 from Oryx Press at 1-800-279-6799 or visit their web site at http://www.oryxpress.com). For more information about the ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service, call 202-939-9433 or check their web site at http://www.acenet.edu.

• **The Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC):** SOC was created in 1972 to provide educational opportunities to servicemembers, who, because they frequently moved from place to place, had trouble completing college degrees. Today, SOC is a consortium of more than 1,200 colleges and universities that provide educational opportunities for servicemembers and their families. For more information about SOC, call 202-667-0079 or 1-800-368-5622 or visit their web site at http://voled.doded.mil/soc/.

Useful Publications

In addition to those mentioned above, here are some useful publications:

• *Academic Institutions That Have Accepted ACE Credit Recommendations,* 1997 edition, American Council on Education, ACE Fulfillment Service, Dept. 191, Washington, DC 20055-0191, Phone: 301-6004-9073, Web Site: http://www.acenet.edu/products/acepubs.html, $10.

• *The College Student's Guide to Transferring Schools: The Hows, Whens, and Whys of Switching Colleges* by Jennifer Wilcha and David A. Smith, ISBN 0-38075-982-9, Avon Books, New York, 1-800-223-0690, http://www.avonbooks.com, $10.95.

• *DETC Occasional Paper Number 10: Home Study Academic Transcripts* by Sally R. Welch, Distance Education and Training Council, 1601 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009, Phone: 202-234-5100, Web Site: http://www.detc.org, Free.

• *Earn College Credit for What You Know* by Lois Lamdin, ISBN 0-78723-573-3, 3rd edition. Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), 243 South Wabash Avenue, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60604, Phone: 312-922-5909, Web Site: http://www.cael.org, $24.95.

• *Pocket Guide to College Credits and Degrees: Valuable Information for Adult Learners Seeking College Degrees* by Jacqueline E. Johnson, Jo Ann Robinson and Sally R.Welch, American Council on Education, ACE Fulfillment Service (see above). $9.95.

• *The Transfer Student's Guide to Changing Colleges* by Sidonia Dalby and Sally Rubenstone, ISBN 0-67184-851-8, Prentice Hall, 1-800-811-0912, Web Site http://www.prenhall.com, $12.00.

Articulation Agreements

Your institution should consider developing an Articulation Agreement with regionally accredited institutions. An articulation agreement is a formal, signed contract between two institutions declaring that they agree to accept credits from each other. The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology publishes two publications that are helpful:

• *A Compilation of Standards and Criteria of Eight Regional Accreditation Commissions Related to Transfer Credit and Articulation Agreements* (March 1997). This tool is a "must" for any school seeking articulation agreements. Here you learn all the rules that the regionals play before you begin.

• *ACCSCT Articulation Manual* (January 1998). This manual will give the "how to" instructions.

These publications are available from the Director of Education, Institutional Development at ACCSCT, 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302, Arlington, VA 22201, phone: 703-247-4212.

Other Suggestions

Sometimes an institution will refuse to accept transfer credit because it has not yet established a policy for granting credit for nontraditional courses or for courses recommended for college credit by the American Council on Education. You should encourage your students to write a thoughtful letter of appeal to the academic dean or provost of the college. They should explain why they believe their work is equivalent to that of the receiving institution. They should compare the descriptions of the courses they completed with the courses listed in the institution's most recent catalog. They should also explain how their course work was reviewed and that the courses they took are accredited by a nationally accrediting agency. Often a letter from the Accrediting Commission of DETC explaining its recognition and verifying that the institution is accredited may do the trick.

Many DETC accredited institutions compile lists of colleges and universities that have accepted transfer credits from their students. You can do this by surveying your graduates and other institutions. One DETC institution sent out letters explaining their accreditation, along with a copy of their catalog, to more than 300 degree-awarding institutions. Each letter was personalized and set to registrars and directors of designated programs. They included only "Yes" forms for them to fill out and return in a self-enclosed stamped envelope. After three weeks, they called the schools who had not responded. They had a return of almost 80% with five weeks, and they all said "Yes, we will grant your

graduates up to 30 semester hours in our allied health department offerings."

If your courses have ACE credit recommendations, ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service can send a letter to the institution on the students behalf. This letter may provide sufficient information for the institution to establish a policy for granting credit for off-campus learning. ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service also offers a permanent, continuously accessible, computerized record of all courses students through the Registry of Credit Recommendations Transcript Service. There's a $25 one-time processing fee to establish a record and a $5 fee for each transcript requested. For more information, contact ACE's Registry of Credit Recommendation Service at 202-939-9433, web site: http://www.acenet.edu.

If Credits Don't Transfer

Here are several reasons a college or university may refuse to accept your student's transfer credit:

- the course content does not fit into the curriculum;
- the grades of "D" or "F" do not transfer;
- there is no room left to apply the courses to elective credit;
- they have already reached the limit of transfer credits that the college will accept; and
- the institution they attended did not have the appropriate accreditation.

If any of these reasons are the case, it is unlikely that they can do anything about having their credits accepted. If your institutions offers a

complete degree program, you may suggest that the student complete his/her degree with you or other DETC member institutions.

Conclusion

Your institution should be committed to helping your students get the academic credit they deserve. The ability to transfer credits is important to your student's future academic and career needs. In addition to being accredited, your institution can help your graduates by:

- counseling its students on how they can successfully transfer credits;
- getting involved with agencies that can help your students, such as AACRAO and SOC;
- having your programs reviewed by ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service; and
- developing articulation agreements with as many institutions as possible.

About the Author

Mr. Ali F. Fares holds a Bachelor and a Master degree in Electrical Engineering. He joined Cleveland Institute of Electronics in 1995 as an instructor, and he was promoted to Academic Director in 1996. Ali attended Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where he served for two consecutive years as the Graduate Senate President. He also served for three years on the University Graduate Council. While at Ohio University, Ali gave several seminars to graduate students on how to obtain research grants from internal and external resources.

Ali also serves on the DETC Government and Public Relations Committee. This *Occasional Paper* was taken from a presentation Ali gave at the DETC Education Directors Seminar at Pennsylvania State University in October 1997.

Other Occasional Papers Available

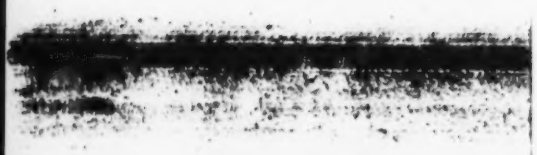
Number 1—*Student Services: Achilles Hell or Crown Jewel?* by Michael P. Lambert, Executive Director, DETC

Number 2—*What Manager Doesn't Study at Home?* by Dr. Gordon Wills, Principal, The International Management Centres

Number 3—*Toward Better Service and Testing* by Dennis Foltz, Vice President of Education and Operations, Gemological Institute of America

Number 4—*Testing Home Study Advertising* by Jack Thompson, Consultant

Number 5—*Conducting Graduate Surveys* by Mary McKeown, Vice President, American School



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Number 10—*Home Study Academic Transcripts* by Sally R. Welch, Assistant Director, DETC

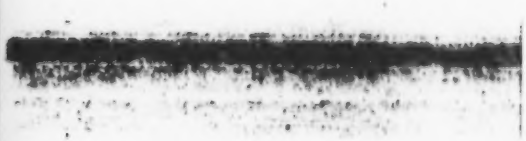
Number 11—*Admissions Policies: The Key to Success* by Josephine L. Ferguson, Member, Accrediting Commission of the DETC

Number 12—*How to Write an Analytical Self-Evaluation Report* by Josephine L. Ferguson, Member, Accrediting Commission of the DETC

Number 13—*Building a Distance Education Faculty* by Dr. John E. Jessup, Academic Dean, American Military University

Number 14—*Embracing the Internet* by Carol Oliver and Dr. Gordon Wills, International Management Centres

Number 15—*Strategies for Helping Students Transfer Credits* by Mr. Ali Fares, Cleveland Institute of Electronics



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